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England - Foreign Office

SECOND LETTER

FROM

THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT PARIS,

WITH ITS ACCOMPANYING INCLOSURE;

AND THE

ANSWER

RETURNED

BY THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD GRENVILLE,

HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

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No. I

Letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris to Lord

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de vous faire passer aujourd'hui la Réponse parcellément officielle
que vous trouverez ci jointe.

Recevez, Mylord, l'Assurance de ma haute Considération.

(Signed) CH. MAU TALLEYRAND

No. II. Minister des Affaires étrangères
London

No. II

which has been transmitted to me; and I am charged to bring
to you, equally official, which you will find annexed.

Recevez, my Lord, the Assurance of my high Consideration.

(Signed) CH. MAU TALLEYRAND

No. III. Minister for Foreign Affairs
London

No. I.

Letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris to Lord Grenville.

MYLORD,

Paris, 24 Nivose, An 8, (Jan. 14, 1800.)

JE me suis empressé de mettre sous les Yeux du Premier Consul de la République Française la Note Officielle en Date du 14 Nivose que vous m'avez transmise; et je me trouve chargé de vous faire passer aujourd'hui la Réponse partiellement officielle que vous trouverez ci jointe.

Recevez, Mylord, l'Assurance de ma haute Considération.

(Signé)

CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND.

*Au Ministre des Affaires étrangères
à Londres.*

No. II.

Translation of the preceding Number.

MY LORD,

Paris, 24 Nivose, 8th Year, (Jan. 14, 1800.)

I LOST no Time in laying before the First Consul of the Republic the Official Note, under Date of the 14th Nivose, which you transmitted to me; and I am charged to forward the Answer, equally official, which you will find annexed.

Receive, my Lord, the Assurance of my high Consideration.

(Signed)

CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND.

*To the Minister for Foreign Affairs
at London.*

No. III.

NOTE referred to in No. I.

LA Note Officielle en Date du 14 Nivose, An 8, adressée par le Ministre de sa Majesté Britannique, ayant été mise sous les Yeux du Premier Consul de la République Française, il a remarqué avec Surprise qu'elle reposait sur une Opinion qui n'est point exacte relativement à l'Origine et aux Conséquences de la Guerre actuelle. Bien loin que ce soit la France qui l'ait provoqué, on se rappelle que dès le Principe de sa Révolution elle avait solennellement proclamé son Amour pour la Paix, son Eloignement pour les Conquêtes, son Respect pour l'Indépendance de tous les Gouvernements ; et il n'est pas douteux qu'occupée alors et sans Partage de ses Affaires intérieures, elle eut évité de prendre Part à celles de l'Europe, et fût demeuré fidèle à ses Déclarations.

Mais par une Disposition opposée, aussitôt que la Révolution Française eut éclaté l'Europe presque entière se ligue pour la détruire. L'Aggression fût réelle long Temps avant d'être publique, on excita les Résistances intérieures, on accueillit les Opposans, on appuya leurs Déclamations extravagantes, on outragea la Nation Française dans la Personne de ses Agens ; et l'Angleterre donna particulièrement cet Exemple par le Renvoi du Ministre accrédité près d'elle : enfin la France fût attaqué de Fait dans son Indépendance, dans son Honneur, et dans sa Sureté, long Temps avant que la Guerre fût déclarée.

Ainsi c'est aux Projets d'Affervissement et de Démembrement qui ont été préparés contre elle, et dont l'Exécution a été plusieurs Fois tenté et poursuivi, que la France est en Droit d'imputer les Maux qu'elle a soufferts et ceux qui ont affligé l'Europe,—de tels Projets, depuis long Tems sans Exemple, à l'Egard d'une aussi puissante Nation ne pouvaient manquer d'amener les plus fatales Conséquences.

Affaillie de toute Part la République a dû porter par tout les Efforts de sa Défensive, et ce n'est que pour le Maintien de sa propre Indépendance qu'elle a fait Usage des Moyens qui étoient dans sa Puissance et dans le Courage de ses Citoyens. Tant qu'elle a vu que ses Ennemis s'obstinaient à méconnaître ses Droits, elle n'a Compté que sur l'Energie de sa Résistance; mais aussitôt qu'ils ont dû renoncer à l'Espoir de l'envahir, elle a cherché des Moyens de Rapprochement, elle a manifesté des Intentions de Paix; et si elles n'ont point toujours été efficaces, si au Milieu des Crises intérieures que la Révolution et la Guerre ont successivement amenés les précédens Dépositaires de l'Autorité Exécutive en France n'ont pas toujours montré autant de Modération que la Nation elle même a déployé de Courage, il faut en accuser sur tout l'Acharnement avec le quel les Ressources de l'Angleterre ont été prodigué pour consommer la Ruine de la France.

Mais si les Vœux de sa Majesté Britannique, comme elle en donne l'Assurance, d'Accord avec ceux de la République Française, sont pour le Rétablissement de la Paix, pourquoi au Lieu d'essayer l'Apologie de la Guerre ne pas mettre son Soin à la terminer; et quel Obstacle peut empêcher un Rapproche-

ment dont l'Utilité est commune et sentie? surtout quand le Premier Consul de la République Française a personnellement donné tant de Preuves de son Empressement à mettre un Terme aux Calamités de la Guerre et de sa Disposition à maintenir l'Observation rigide des Traités conclus.

Le Premier Consul de la République Française ne pouvait pas douter que sa Majesté Britannique ne reconnut le Droit des Nations à choisir la Forme de leur Gouvernement, puisque c'est de l'Exercice de ce Droit qu'elle tient sa Couronne; mais il n'a pu comprendre comment à Côté de ce Principe fondamental et sur le quel repose l'Existence des Sociétés Politiques, le Ministre de sa Majesté a pu placer des Insinuations par lesquelles il tend à s'immiscer aux Affaires intérieures de la République, et qui ne sont pas moins injurieuses pour la Nation Française et pour son Gouvernement que ne le seraient pour l'Angleterre et pour sa Majesté une Sorte de Provocation vers le régime Républicain dont l'Angleterre adopta les Formes au Milieu du Siècle dernier, ou une Exhortation à rappeler au Trône cette Famille que la Naissance y avoit placé et qu'une Révolution en a fait descendre.

Si à des Epoque peu éloignées, et quand le Système constitutif de la République ne présentait ni la Force ni la Solidité qu'il renferme aujourd'hui, Sa Majesté Britannique a cru provoquer elle même un Rapprochement et des Conférences de Paix comment ne ferait elle pas empressée de renouer des Négociations auxquelles l'Etat présent et réciproque des Affaires promet une Marche prompt? De toute Part la Voix des Peuples et de l'Humanité implore la Fin d'une Guerre marquée déjà par de si grands désastres et dont la Prolongation menace l'Europe d'un Ebranle-

ment universel et de Maux sans Remède; c'est donc pour arrêter le Cours de ces Calamités, ou afin que leur terribles Conséquences ne soient reprochées qu'à ceux qui les auraient provoquées, que le Premier Consul de la République Française propose de mettre sur le Champ un Terme aux Hostilités en convenant d'une Suspension d'Armes et en nommant immédiatement de Part et d'autre des Plenipotentiaires qui se rendraient à Dunkerque ou dans toute autre Ville non moins avantageusement située pour la Rapidité des Communications respectives, et qui travailleraient sans aucun Retard au Rétablissement de la Paix et de la bonne Amitié entre la République Française et l'Angleterre.

Le Premier Consul offre à cet Egard de donner les Passeports qui seraient nécessaires.

(Signed)

CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND.

Paris, le 24 Nivose, An 8 de la

République Française.

No. IV.

Translation of the preceding Number.

THE Official Note, under Date of the fourteenth Nivose, the eighth Year, addressed by the Minister of His Britannic Majesty, having been laid before the First Consul of the French Republic, he observed with Surprise, that it rested upon an Opinion which is not exact respecting the Origin and Consequences of the present War.—Very far from its being France which provoked it, she had, it must be remembered, from the Commence-

ment of her Revolution, solemnly proclaimed her Love of Peace and her Disinclination to Conquests, her Respect for the Independance of all Governments: and it is not to be doubted that, occupied at that Time entirely with her own internal Affairs, she would have avoided taking Part in those of Europe, and would have remained faithful to her Declarations.

But from an opposite Disposition, as soon as the French Revolution had broken out, almost all Europe entered into a League for its Destruction. The Aggression was real, long Time before it was public; internal Resistance was excited; its Opponents were favourably received; their extravagant Declamations were supported; the French Nation was insulted in the Person of its Agents; and England set particularly this Example by the Dismissal of the Minister accredited to her.—Finally, France was, in Fact, attacked in her Independance, in her Honour, and in her Safety, long Time before the War was declared.

Thus it is to the Projects of Subjection, Dissolution, and Dismemberment, which were prepared against her, and the Execution of which was several Times attempted and pursued, that France has a Right to impute the Evils which she has suffered, and those which have afflicted Europe. Such Projects, for a long Time without Example, with respect to so powerful a Nation, could not fail to bring on the most fatal Consequences.

Assailed on all Sides, the Republic could not but extend universally the Efforts of her Defence; and it is only for the Maintenance of her own Independance that she has made Use of those

Means which she possessed, in her own Strength and the Courage of her Citizens. As long as she saw that her Enemies obstinately refused to recognize her Rights, she counted only upon the Energy of her Resistance; but as soon as they were obliged to abandon the Hope of Invasion, she sought for Means of Conciliation, and manifested pacific Intentions: and if these have not always been efficacious; if, in the Midst of the critical Circumstances of her internal Situation, which the Revolution and the War have successively brought on, the former Depositaries of the Executive Authority in France have not always shewn as much Moderation as the Nation itself has shewn Courage, it must, above all, be imputed to the fatal and persevering Animosity with which the Resources of England have been lavished to accomplish the Ruin of France.

But if the Wishes of His Britannic Majesty (in conformity with His Assurances) are, in Unison with those of the French Republic, for the Re-establishment of Peace, why, instead of attempting the Apology of the War, should not Attention be rather paid to the Means of terminating it? And what Obstacle can prevent a mutual Understanding, of which the Utility is reciprocal and is felt, especially when the First Consul of the French Republic has personally given so many Proofs of his Eagerness to put an End to the Calamities of War, and of his Disposition to maintain the rigid Observance of all Treaties concluded?

The First Consul of the French Republic could not doubt that His Britannic Majesty recognized the Right of Nations to choose the Form of their Government, since it is from the Exercise

of this Right that he holds his Crown ; but he has been unable to comprehend how to this fundamental Principle, upon which rests the Existence of Political Societies, the Minister of His Majesty could annex Insinuations which tend to an Interference in the internal Affairs of the Republic, and which are no less injurious to the French Nation and to its Government, than it would be to England and to His Majesty, if a Sort of Invitation were held out in favor of that Republican Government of which England adopted the Forms in the Middle of the last Century, or an Exhortation to recall to the Throne that Family whom their Birth had placed there, and whom a Revolution compelled to descend from it.

If at Periods not far distant, when the Constitutional System of the Republic presented neither the Strength nor the Solidity which it contains at present, His Britannic Majesty thought himself enabled to invite a Negotiation and pacific Conferences ; how is it possible that he should not be eager to renew Negotiations to which the present and reciprocal Situation of Affairs promises a rapid Progress. On every Side the Voice of Nations and of Humanity implores the Conclusion of a War, marked already by such great Calamities, and the Prolongation of which threatens Europe with an universal Convulsion and irreparable Evils. It is, therefore, to put a Stop to the Course of these Calamities, or in order that their terrible Consequences may be reproached to those only who shall have provoked them, that the First Consul of the French Republic proposes to put an immediate End to Hostilities, by agreeing to a Suspension of Arms, and naming Plenipotentiaries on each Side, who should repair to Dun-

kirk, or any other Town as advantageously situated for the Quickness of the respective Communications, and who should apply themselves without any Delay to effect the Re-establishment of Peace and good Understanding between the French Republic and England.

The First Consul offers to give the Passports which may be necessary for this Purpose.

(Signed) CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND.

*Paris, the 24th Nivose, (14th Jan. 1800,) eighth
Year of the French Republic.*

No. V.

*Letter from Lord Grenville to the Minister for Foreign Affairs at
Paris.*

S I R,

Downing-Street, January 20, 1800.

I HAVE the Honor to inclose to you the Answer which His Majesty has directed me to return to the Official Note which you transmitted to me.

I have the Honor to be,
with high Consideration,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

(Signed) GRENVILLE.

*To the Minister for Foreign Affairs,
&c. &c. at Paris.*

No. VI.

NOTE *referred to in the preceding Number.*

THE Official Note transmitted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in France, and received by the Underigned on the 18th Instant, has been laid before the King.

His Majesty cannot forbear expressing the Concern with which he observes in that Note, that the unprovoked Aggressions of France, the sole Cause and Origin of the War, are systematically defended by her present Rulers under the same injurious Pretences by which they were originally attempted to be disguised. His Majesty will not enter into the Refutation of Allegations now universally exploded, and (in so far as they respect His Majesty's Conduct) not only in themselves utterly groundless, but contradicted both by the internal Evidence of the Transactions to which they relate, and also by the express Testimony (given at the Time) of the Government of France itself.

With respect to the Object of the Note, His Majesty can only refer to the Answer which he has already given.

He has explained, without Reserve, the Obstacles which, in his Judgment, preclude at the present Moment all Hope of Advantage from Negotiation. All the Inducements to treat, which are relied upon in the French Official Note; the personal Dispositions which are said to prevail for the Conclusion of Peace, and for the future Observance of Treaties; the Power of insuring the Effect of

those Dispositions, supposing them to exist; and the Solidity of the System newly established, after so rapid a Succession of Revolutions; all these are Points which can be known only from that Test to which His Majesty has already referred them—the Result of Experience and the Evidence of Facts.

With that Sincerity and Plainness which His Anxiety for the Re-establishment of Peace indispensably required, His Majesty has pointed out to France the surest and speediest Means for the Attainment of that great Object. But He has declared in Terms equally explicit, and with the same Sincerity, that He entertains no Desire to prescribe to a Foreign Nation the Form of its Government; that He looks only to the Security of His Own Dominions and of Europe; and that whenever that essential Object can in His Judgment be, in any Manner whatever, sufficiently provided for, He will eagerly concert with His Allies the Means of immediate and joint Negotiation for the Re-establishment of General Tranquillity.

To these Declarations His Majesty steadily adheres, and it is only on the Grounds thus stated, that His Regard to the Safety of His Subjects will suffer Him to renounce that System of vigorous Defence, to which, under the Favour of Providence, His Kingdoms owe the Security of those Blessings which they now enjoy.

(Signed) GRENVILLE.

Downing-Street, Jan. 20, 1800.

These Dispositions, supposing them to exist, and the solidity of the
System newly established, there is rapid a succession of Revo-
lutions; all these are Points which can be known only from the
Test to which His Majesty has already referred them—the History
of Experience and the Evidence of Facts.

With Great Sincerity and Painments which His Majesty for the
Re-establishment of Peace indispensably required, His Majesty has
pointed out to France the sure and speedy means for the
Attainment of that great Object. For He has declared in Terms
equally explicit, and with the same sincerity, that His Majesty
no Desire to prescribe to a foreign Nation the form of its Govern-
ment; that He will only to a State of His Majesty's Majesty
and of Europe; and that He will only to a State of His Majesty's Majesty
His Majesty's Majesty is only to a State of His Majesty's Majesty
for He will only to a State of His Majesty's Majesty
and joint Regent for the State of His Majesty's Majesty
Transparency.



To these Dispositions His Majesty's Majesty has only on the Grounds of this final, and His Majesty's Majesty
the Subjects of His Majesty's Majesty, and His Majesty's Majesty
Science, to which, under the name of His Majesty's Majesty
down to the Society of His Majesty's Majesty which now exists.

(Signed) His Majesty's Majesty
His Majesty's Majesty

